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Bishops' Report Names CIA

Says U.S. Has 'Infiltrated' Non-Catholic Groups in Brazil

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Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil—A Roman Catholic Church report sent to the Vatican alleges that the CIA has infiltrated non-Catholic religious groups and that Americans have sent large sums of money to independent religious sects in Brazil.

The Rev. Arnaldo Beltrami, spokesman for the National Council of Brazilian Bishops, said this week that the Most Rev. Sinesio Bohn conducted a survey of "almost all the bishops" to reach this conclusion.

Beltrami said the responses were

compiled from questionnaires sent to the bishops, but he did not elaborate how the results were formulated.

The report did not give any indication as to why the CIA and American groups would want to aid non-Catholics in Brazil.

Asked about the report, Kathy Pherson, a CIA spokeswoman, said, "Generally we don't comment on allegations of CIA activities. It's a matter of policy."

Beltrami said the 21-page report was not an official document because it was not submitted to the bishops' council for a vote but was rather "a study sent to the Vatican showing the research."

The report outlined the growth of non-Catholic religions and sects in Brazil. It said many groups, including Protestant evangelical sects, Christian Scientists and Hare Krishnas, came to Brazil with American help.

The document claims the CIA and American missions have helped the groups enter Brazil, including providing visas for them. The document did not specify what groups were providing economic backing.

"Strong groups, especially from the United States, send large sums of money for the activities of independent religious groups," the report said. "Data furnished by inter-faith organizations prove that var-

ious missions receive large financial help, especially from the United States."

It said Catholic missionaries, "who are pledged to the cause of the poor, encounter difficulties entering the country, while missionaries from other religious groups that are not concerned with social problems enter easily."

"There have been indications that this scheme is not only from the right or military of the national government [Brazil], but also includes the American global strategy," the document continued.

"There has been CIA infiltration in certain groups, or by those that are in the service of the same. The problem is extremely serious and needs much deeper study."

The report, written on official bishops' council stationery, quoted the 1980 census as showing the percentage of Roman Catholics had dropped from 93.5 percent in 1950 to 88.4 percent.